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**CITY OF GAITHERSBURG
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 7, 2008
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING**

A meeting of the Historic District Commission was called to order at 8:38 p.m., Chair Katz presiding. Commissioners present: Ashman, Drzyzgula, Marraffa, Sesma, and Spiegel. Planning Commission present: Bauer, Levy, Hopkins, Kaufman, and Lanier (Alt.). Staff present: Acting City Manager Arnoult, Assistant City Manager Felton, Planner Marsh, and Executive Assistant Stokes.

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

HD-32, Application Requests Historic Designation of the England Crown Farm Site Located at 9800 Fields Road, Gaithersburg, Maryland

Planner Marsh gave a PowerPoint presentation stating that the joint public hearing on HD-32 was advertised in the *Gaithersburg Gazette* on December 19 and 26, 2007, and the property posted. The Crown Farm is located at the southwest side of Fields Road, bounded by Sam Eig Highway to the northwest and Omega Drive to the southeast. The Crown Farm was annexed into the City on August 7, 2006. As required by the Crown Farm Annexation (X-182) and the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, following the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee's (HPAC) review and recommendation, the Historic District Commission (HDC) must determine the extent of the appropriate environmental setting for the existing parkland structures.

In April of 2007, the Planning and Code Administration enlisted the services of a consultant to create an inventory and make specific recommendations on the farmstead. HPAC used the prepared document and historic designation criteria to formulate their recommendation to preserve the structures, the historic setting, and unanimously supported the concept of moving the Heeter-Crown house to the England-Crown Farm historic site. The recommendation further stated that the following buildings be included in the historic designation: 1) The England Crown Manor House – Building A; 2) The Log House – Building B; 3) Smoke House - Building C; 4) Corn Crib Barn – Building N; 5) Small Barn – Building Q; 6) Dairy Barn – Building R-1 and two silos; 7) Hay Barn – Building R-2; 8) Milk House – Building R-3; 9) Metal Corn Storage Bin– Building G-1; 10) Garage/Storage – Building J and Storage – Building J1.

In response to several questions, Planner Marsh stated that to move the Heeter-Crown house to the other property, the developer would have to subdivide lot 8 and do a SDP Amendment, but an evaluation of the environment would not be required. She further stated that because the two homes would be privately owned residential buildings, an historic area work permit would be required for improvements.

Richard Arkin, 121 Selby Street, speaking on behalf of the HPAC, emphasized how strongly the Committee unanimously feels about its recommendations. The Committee recommended the site be designated as a local historic site because it is the last remaining example of a farm complex in Gaithersburg. He stated that the site exemplifies the evolution of Gaithersburg as an agricultural community and its relationship to the downtown. The Committee further recommended that any building not historically designated, be documented and the salvageable materials be made available for reuse. Speaking on the environmental setting, the HPAC suggested the design guidelines for the historic site be crafted to provide for the future development of the City park land and also for the protection of the stream valley buffer to allow for addition changes proposed by the City or the private property owner on the lots. He reiterated that the Committee unanimously supports moving the Heeter-Crown Farm House onto the site adjacent to the England Crown House.

Wayne Goldstein, President of Montgomery Preservation, Inc. (MPI), on behalf of the organization, supported the recommendations of the HPAC and urged the Planning Commission and HDC to agree with the proposed historic designations.

Lorraine Pearson, MPI, thanked the Commission for working together constructively on the project to find a solution and move closer to a conclusion. She submitted color renderings done by Michael Winceck for review.

Judith Christensen, 6 Walker Avenue, on behalf of the Gaithersburg Historical Association thanked the City for their efforts on the project. She stated that the historic site would provide an opportunity to create an education center for Gaithersburg and to learn facts about the settlement of the German family, spelled Hieter. She further stated that it would be an opportunity for Gaithersburg to have the homes reused as private homes.

Assistant City Manager Felton clarified that if the historic designation is approved, it would not be mandated that the Heeter-Crown House be moved. He stated that staff will continue working with the developer to make arrangements for relocating the house and address any issues in an upcoming annexation agreement amendment.

Motion was made by Planning Commissioner Kaufman, seconded by Commissioner Levy, that the Planning Commission hold their record open on HD-32 until 5 p.m., Monday, February 4, 2008.

Vote: 5-0

Motion was made by Historic District Commissioner Sesma, seconded by Commissioner Spiegel, that the Historic District Commission hold their record open on HD-32 until 5 p.m. on Thursday, February 14, 2008.

Vote: 6-0

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Historic District Commission, the meeting was duly adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Doris R. Stokes

Executive Assistant